

**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method for distributed computing in a data processing system located in a vehicle, the method comprising:
- monitoring for a condition in the vehicle data processing system in which processing resources can be  
10 safely used for processing a work unit;  
responsive to detecting the condition, initiating processing of the work unit to generate a result; and  
transmitting the result to a target data system in a remote location.
- 15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the condition is a time when the vehicle is parked.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the condition is a  
20 time when the processing resources are not being used.
4. The method of claim 2 further comprising:  
monitoring a battery power level in the vehicle.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the result is transmitted using a wireless communications link.
6. The method of claim 2, wherein the vehicle is parked if the engine is stopped.
- 30 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the processing resources are provided by a first processor in the data

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processing system and wherein the monitoring step, the initiating step, and the transmitting step are performed by a second processor in the data processing system.

5 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the monitoring step includes determining whether a key is present in an ignition for the vehicle.

9. A method for processing a work unit in a vehicle  
10 data processing system located in a vehicle, the method comprising:

monitoring the vehicle to determine when processing resources can be safely used for processing the work unit; and

15 responsive to detecting a time in which processing resources can be safely used for processing the work unit, allocating processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to process the work unit.

20 10. The method of claim 9 further comprising:  
returning a result generated from processing of the work unit to a requestor.

11. The method of claim 9 further comprising:  
25 initiating the allocating step only if a sufficient battery power level is present within the vehicle.

12. A data processing system comprising:  
a bus system;  
30 a communications unit connected to the bus system;  
a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and

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- 10 13. A data processing system comprising:  
a bus system;  
a communications unit connected to the bus system;  
a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the  
memory includes as set of instructions; and  
15 a processing unit connected to the bus system,  
wherein the processing unit executes the set of  
instructions to monitor the vehicle to determine when the  
vehicle is parked; and allocate processor resources  
within the vehicle data processing system to process the  
20 work unit in response to identifying a time in which the  
vehicle is parked.

14. A data processing system for distributed computing  
in a data processing system located in a vehicle, the  
25 data processing system comprising:  
monitoring means for monitoring for a condition in  
the vehicle data processing system in which processing  
resources can be safely used for processing a work unit;  
initiating means, responsive to detecting the  
30 condition, for initiating processing of the work unit to  
generate a result; and  
transmitting means for transmitting the result to a

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target data system in a remote location.

15. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the condition is a time when the vehicle is parked.

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16. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the condition is a time when the processing resources are not being used.

10 17. The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the monitoring means is a first monitoring means and further comprising:

second monitoring means for monitoring a battery power level in the vehicle.

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18. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the result is transmitted using a wireless communications link.

20 19. The data processing system of claim 16, wherein the vehicle is parked if the engine is stopped.

20. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the processing resources are provided by a first processor in  
25 the data processing system and wherein the monitoring means, the initiating means, and the transmitting means are performed by a second processor in the data processing system.

30 21. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the monitoring means includes determining whether a key is present in an ignition for the vehicle.

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22. A data processing system for processing a work unit in a vehicle data processing system located in a vehicle, the data processing system comprising:

5        monitoring means for monitoring the vehicle to determine when the vehicle is parked; and

         allocating means, responsive to identify a time in which the vehicle is parked, for allocating processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to  
10       process the work unit.

23. The data processing system of claim 22 further comprising:

         returning means for returning a result generated  
15       from processing of the work unit to a requestor.

24. The data processing system of claim 22 further comprising:

         initiating means for initiating the allocating step  
20       only if a sufficient battery power level is present within the vehicle.

25. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for distributed computing in a data processing  
25       system located in a vehicle, the computer program product comprising:

         first instructions for monitoring for a condition in the vehicle data processing system in which processing resources can be safely used for processing a work unit;  
30       second instructions, responsive to detecting the condition, for initiating processing of the work unit to generate a result; and

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third instructions for transmitting the result to a target data system in a remote location.

27. The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the condition is a time when the processing resources are not being used.

28. The computer program product of claim 26 further comprising:

fourth instructions for monitoring a battery power level in the vehicle.

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30. The computer program product of claim 27, wherein the vehicle is parked if the engine is stopped.

31. The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the processing resources are provided by a first processor in the data processing system and wherein the monitoring step, the initiating step, and the transmitting step are performed by a second processor in the data processing system.

32. The method of claim 25, wherein the first instructions includes determining whether a key is present in an ignition for the vehicle.

second instructions, responsive to identify a time in which the vehicle is parked, for allocating processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to process the work unit.

third instructions for returning a result generated from processing of the work unit to a requestor.

third instructions for initiating the allocating step only if a sufficient battery power level is present within the vehicle.